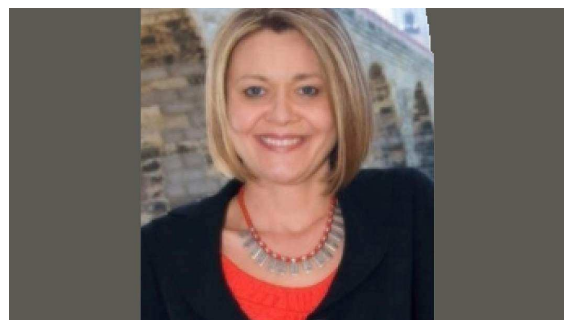


Macalester professor researching book re feminism in post-communist Poland

St. Paul, Minn. - Edith M. Kelso Professor of Art History, **Joanna Inglot**, has received a grant from the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) to support research for her new book, *Feminism on Trial: Gender, Art, and Politics in Post-Communist Poland, 1989-2014*. She is currently on sabbatical in Warsaw, Poland, examining artistic and socio-political dynamics of post-communist transformations and their impact on feminist art.



Inglot is exploring diverse groups of feminist, queer, and transgender artists who after 1989 have addressed wide-ranging restraints on sexuality, tackled contentious issues of reproductive rights, violence against women, xenophobia, and re-examined cultural stereotypes to unsettle the dominant political culture. While their work stems from the social and political tensions of the post-communist region, Inglot also traces how these interventions intersect with current transnational feminist debates, redefining concepts of citizenship and democracy, and attitudes toward gender and social justice.



What did happen to women's rights in Poland after the fall of communism in that country? Contrary to expectations, the collapse of the communist regime in 1989 and the ensuing economic and political transformations did not bring a renewal of women's rights or greater equality in public life. Instead, a return to traditional female roles, supposedly weakened by decades of communist rule, became a central theme in the Polish socio-political discourse. Meanwhile, feminist artists and activists have been discredited and attacked by conservative politicians, some mainstream media and the Roman Catholic Church, for undermining "the traditional values of Polish society."

Faced with the failures of democratic institutions to ensure the protection and expansion of women's rights, along with the increasing marginalization and censorship of feminist and alternative voices in politics and culture, feminist artists and their work stand as the most visible substitute for communities and institutions that would represent minority opinions and preferences during the later phase of the democratization processes now dominated almost entirely by liberal-conservative groups and parties.

IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing thought leadership and innovative programs to

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promote positive lasting change globally.

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